

## **Francis Preston Blair to Andrew Jackson, August 4, 1844, from Correspondence of Andrew Jackson. Edited by John Spencer Bassett.**

class=MsoNormal>FRANCIS P. BLAIR TO JACKSON.

Silver Spring, Md. , August 4, 1844.

My Dear General: Your letter of the 12th ult. has been at hand for some ten days, but as I had a long letter some where on the road to you I concluded not to trouble you with another so quick upon its heels. Yet it is a great pleasure to me to write to you. I like to submit my inmost thoughts to one who I am sure will appreciate them justly and 0334 310 on whose wisdom and patriotism I can safely rely, for direction where any course required it.

From first to last I have entirely concurred with you as to the propriety of Congress immediately seizing upon the overture of Texas to introduce her into the Union. It is impossible, however while Whiggery holds the strength which it must hold for two years to come, to bring Texas in by treaty. It is, therefore, the evident policy of the Democracy looking to the easiest and earliest accomplishment of this great measure, to drop the idea of a Treaty and urge a joint congressional act to effect the object. This frees the subject from the objections taken by some of our leading friends to the late Tyler attempt, which was not only looked upon as an intrigue to make a political issue to affect the Democratic candidate for the presidency, but as a contrivance to throw back annexation itself by putting it in the power of Federalism to balk the movement. This was merely to convert it into a matter for Southern legislation connected with the Tariff and slave questions and render the slave states pliable to the purposes of that man, who had been accessory to the shameful surrender of that Territory to Spain.

## Library of Congress

In taking the Texas affair, altogether out of the hands of the sinister managers who were really sacrificing the interest and peace of both Texas and our union to their own selfish ends, and out of the power of Federalism, which can crush a treaty no matter how prudently or patriotically arranged, congressional annexation will at once dispel all difficulties. Such an act which may incur the responsibility of war, will be necessary to quiet the scruples of some honest patriots among us and will give strength to the cause both at home and abroad. What the people of two great countries do in pursuing their own happiness, cannot be met in the face of the world, by any attempt on the part of intriguing, intermediary Governments looking to its defeat by force. The peaceable voluntary union of two such great communities as Texas and the U. S. could not be foiled by France, England, Mexico, nor all the other selfish Govts. of the world combined. The moral feeling of even all subjected to those foreign Governments, would revolt at any effort to sunder such bonds of brotherhood and the power of the United Confederacy thus supported by the moral sense of all the nations, would be able easily to frown down without striking a blow, the machinations of such interested interlopers as England and France working with Santa Anna. I go therefore for immediate congressional annexation as the most feasible, earliest, safest, strongest and most entirely unobjectionable mode of carrying the point. And as a matter of party policy I think it is wise that it should be proposed in this way, at your great Nashville meeting. There may be honest democrats all over the union opposed to extending our confederacy, especially some may be looked for in the north. If they be honest democrats they cannot object to the will of the people of the union prevailing in this matter. If however they were led to believe that it was to be effected by a mere Executive act they might vote against Mr. Polk, who stands committed for annexation.

class=MsoNormal>0335 311

I regret exceedingly that my duty to the cause denies me the pleasure of going to see you and making one of the great Nashville gathering around you. I need not tell you, dear General, how my heart yearns to be with you in such a proud hour of glory, in the Evening

## Library of Congress

of your illustrious life. Of the thousands who will make the Journey to Nashville, on this errand of party devotion, there will not be one true heart, that will not give its homage to you as the impersonation of the cause of the country, of human liberty and happiness and all that is sacred in the rights of man, for which through life you have stood forth the most honest and fearless defender, known in the annals of the Earth. That you are reserved for this happy manifestation of popular enthusiasm, approaching a religious feeling, is to me a beautiful joy. I hope you will live to see it crowned with fruit in the election of your friend and favorite, whom the people not less in respect for him, than affection for you, have christened Young Hickory.

I have a letter from my youngest child, Frank, who attends the convention, saying that he goes to see you, rather than to add to the mass , of which he will make a very inconsiderable atom. He entertains for you a feeling of affectionate reverence that would carry him to the ends of the earth to see and to serve you.

You will have an opportunity of conversing with Colo. Polk during the meeting. I wish you could say one word to him of poor Trist 1 at Havana who although one of the most intelligent and honest men of our country was removed from office by Mr. Tyler, without any motive but to put out his patronage at usury. Trist has bronchitis and cannot live out of a southern clime, and at Havana he lives by the sales of a market Garden! How melancholy to think, that almost all our Jefferson descendants have been banished by want from the country to which he gave independence, to seek independence under despotisms. One of his grand daughters has spent years in China and in Europe with her husband in pursuit of commerce. Mrs. Trist is condemned to live in Cuba, by pandering to the stomachs of rich Spaniards. And Mrs. Meikleham has just returned from Scotland with her husband, the Doctor, who I fear is doomed to be a cripple for life and incapable of following his profession, and possibly to lose his leg (and with it may be his life) by a disease in the feet, which is supposed to be scrofula. I have invited them to live with me until his fate is determined. Colo. Polk, if he attains power, I am sure will do what he can

## Library of Congress

to serve the worthy descendants of Mr. Jefferson and repay his countrys obligations to the Democratic patriark.

1 Nicholas P. Trist.

The Colonel, I think will need no caution against commitments to Calhoun's faction. You will have seen in their early movements and in Mr. Holmes's late letter, how anxious these people are to identify him, (Colo. P.) with their unpopularity. It would suit Mr. Calhoun's aims to have Clay and the Tariff and the Anti-Texas party to fight against rather than Colo. Polk's administration to fight for unless it could be made entirely subservient to his views, and then he would have it break 0336 312 with the northern Democracy and go into the schemes of "resistance" if all were not yielded that the disunionists demand—and this Mr. Holmes says Colo. Polk, if president will not be able to obtain, and if he does not, he must go into "resistance" with the South Carolina Junto or be resisted by them. I saw from the first that federalism would seek to blend Colo. Polk with the disunion threats of the South Carolinian conspirators, and therefore I denounced them at the Jump in the Globe to prevent all such conclusions in regard to the Democracy and its candidate, which if ever suspected to be possible in the North would ruin our cause. I would denounce also the new Holmes machination, having the same end in view, if I did not believe the country to be now fully aware of these insidious covenants. I will not pursue them farther now, lest it might operate on some of the weak and honest men of Calhoun's interest to vote against Colo. Polk, to resent my attack on the knot of conspirators in whom they have too much confidence. Have no fear of my following Benton out of the Democratic ranks, even should he go, which is not all likely. I backed water a little for Mr. Van Buren to bring him finally into your Texas ship, but much as I respect him, I would not have surrendered the question for his sake nor have delayed it even. But I saw it could not go through the Senate soon and therefore, was willing to wait for him to come up, as he would have done. But I exhaust you. Love to Mrs. Jackson.

yo. af. friend,

## Library of Congress

Washington, August 5, 1844.

P. S. Since writing the within, I came to the City and found your letter of the 26 postmarked 28. I am greatly distressed at the suggestion of Houstons giving way and throwing Texas into the net spread for [it] by France, England and Mexico at the moment when there is the greatest reason to suppose that the Democracy is likely to triumph and gain the Cause of Texas, not only the glory of complete success in the acquisition of independence of Mexico, but of making a conquest of the United States also. Houston might hope to be president of a confederacy stretching from the Canadas to the Del Norte instead of a dependency of European farms cramped in between the U. States and Mexico. Lewis has also shown me a letter from you and on that and the one to me I have written a hasty article for this Evening's Globe. I hope it may prompt the people of the South and West to take decided ground in favor of going to the rescue of Texas. The appeal must be to the people not to the Tyler Government. It is in my opinion rotten to the core. Calhoun you may rest assured will be willing to second the machinations of France and England [to?] succeed as a ground work of his own. But I harass you overmuch with my long letters. Your devoted friend